

JANUARY 1934

RECKLESS RALPH'S

DIME NOVEL ROUND-UP

OFFICIAL ORGAN HAPPY HOURS BROTHERHOOD

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NORMAN L. MUNRO, Publisher.

By William L. Beck.

Norman Munro was one of the big seven, of those great publishers, who issued for nearly a generation, a large number of novels and story papers, song books, joke books, recitations, etc. He competed with George P. Munro-Beadle and Adams-Frank Tousey-Street & Smith-Robert Bonner-James Elverson-and will also include Robert M. Dewitt.

He first started his novels in late 1860's, possibly 1868 or 1869, when he issued the Claude Duval, Black Highwayman, Ten Cent Popular, Ornum & Co.'s Indian, and Ornum's 15¢ Novels. Also a series of song and joke books. It was in the Ornum & Co.'s Indian novels, that Harry St. George Rath borne first began to write romances, and from then on, became one of the most proficient of the novel writers of his era.

Born in a suburban part of Chicago, this author wrote stories for nearly all the fiction publishers, except George Munro and Frank Leslie. He had more pen names than any other novelist I know of. Among them, were the following: Marline Manly-Harry St. George-Geo. St. George-Lieut. St. George Rathborne-Ward Edwards-Duke Duncan-Dash Dale-Lieut. Keene-Maj. Andy Burton-A Private Detective-Alexander Robertson-H. D. Mark Merrick-Alex Forbes-Jack Howard-Warno Miller-and others he used in stock names with different authors. In 1873, Norman Munro started the Family Story Paper which had a run of 33 years.

VOLUME THREE

NUMBER TWENTY-SIX

About the same year, 1873, Norman Munro started that famous boys story paper, "THE BOYS OF NEW YORK", which after several years was bought by Frank Tousey, who was at that time publishing the BOYS LEADER, and in conjunction with George G. Small, the TOUSEY and SMALL'S BOYS MONTHLY.

In the 1870's (exact date is uncertain) Norman L. Munro also published the following boys papers, all of which had short runs: NEW YORK BOYS WEEKLY-THE BOYS OWN, or, THE WEEKLY STORY TELLER-and OUR BOYS. The NEW YORK BOYS WEEKLY was merged with the BOYS OF NEW YORK; the WEEKLY STORY TELLER was merged with OUR BOYS, and in turn this paper was combined with TOUSEY'S YOUNG MEN OF AMERICA.

The YOUNG MEN OF AMERICA had started in 1877, and in 1889 the name was changed to THE GOLDEN WEEKLY. After several years run it merged with the BOYS OF NEW YORK, when later on this paper changed its name to HAPPY DAYS.

Norman Munro also published the following: THE NEW SENSATION-GOLDEN HOURS-MUNRO'S LIBRARY (similar to Geo. Munro's Seaside Library in the pocket edition form)-THE UP TO DATE LIBRARY-FAMOUS OLD CAP COLLIER LIBRARY-and the NEW YORK BOYS LIBRARY. This last-named started in 1877 and when bought out by Tousey, was renamed the FIVE CENT WIDE AWAKE LIBRARY, which I believe ran well up in the 1300's and over. (Note: Reckless Ralph says they went over 1350).

This Library was made up of reprints from many different publications, with original stories between. Many stories were taken from boys papers of England and also the following: BOYS OWN STORY TELLER-OUR BOYS-BOYS LEADER-TOUSEY & SMALL'S MONTHLY-NEW YORK BOYS WEEKLY-BOYS OF NEW YORK-YOUNG

MEN OF AMERICA-and the FIVE CENT WEEKLY LIBRARY.

The NEW YORK BOYS LIBRARY is not to be confused with a later library of that same name that was published by the New York Popular Publishing Co., who were publishing also a boys paper, called HARRIGAN & HART'S NEW YORK BOYS LIBRARY.

In the first numbers of MUNRO'S NEW YORK BOYS LIBRARY, were stories written by authors of great fame, such as: Thomas Hughes who was the author of the first number, called "Tom Brown's School Days"-stories by Captain Frederick Marryat-Charles Dickens-Daniel Defoe-Alexander Dumas-Harrison Ainsworth-Sylvanus Cobb-and Prof. J.H. Ingraham. Also all of Bracebridge Homyngs-Jack Harkaway-the Dick Lightheart stories-all of the Claude Duval tales-and of other great highwaymen, such as Jack Sheppard-Dick Turpin-and Ned Scarlet...In the later numbers, many of the Frank Reade stories appeared. Truly the old WIDE AWAKE LIBRARY was of great variety.

(Note: Wm. L. Beck wrote this article just before he died. It was sent in by his brother George. Thanks for sending it to the D.N.R.)

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William M. Burns reports: "Buffalo Bill was born in Scott County, Iowa, Feb. 26, 1845. He died at Denver, Colorado, Jan. 10, 1917. He killed his first Indian at the age of 12 years."

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